

Standard USHC-8: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of World War II on United States' foreign and domestic policies.

USHC-8.1 Analyze the United States' decision to enter World War II, including the rise and aggression of totalitarian regimes in Italy under Benito Mussolini, in Germany under Adolf Hitler, and in Japan under Hideki Tojo; the United States' movement from a policy of isolationism to international involvement; and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. (H, P)

Taxonomy Level: 4B Analyze /Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

In the 5th grade, students explained the principal events related to the United States' involvement in World War II. This included the bombing of Pearl Harbor,...and the role of key figures of the period (5-4.4).

In the 7th grade, students summarized aspects of the rise of totalitarian government in Germany, Italy, Japan, and the Soviet Union, including Fascist aggression and the responses of major powers and the rise of Joseph Stalin. (7-5.4) Students also explained the causes, key events, and outcomes of World War II, including the German, Italian, and Japanese drives for empire; the role of appeasement and isolationism in Europe and the United States...and the roles of political leaders (7-5.5).

In Global Studies, students explained the causes, key events, and outcomes of World War II, including the

German, Italian, and Japanese drives for empire; the role of appeasement and isolationism in Europe and the United States...and the political leaders during the time (GS-5.4). Students compared the ideologies and global effects of totalitarianism, Communism, Fascism, Nazism, and democracy in the twentieth century, including Lenin's adaptation of Marxism in Russia, the rise of Fascism and Nazism in Europe, and militarism in Japan prior to World War II (GS5.5).

It is essential for the students to know:

World War I, the Treaty of Versailles and economic depressions laid the groundwork for the rise of **totalitarian regimes** in Italy and Germany. Nineteenth century imperialism by western powers and rapid industrialization in Japan led to that nation's government coming under the control of the military. Students should recall some details about the rise of Mussolini, Hitler and Tojo from both 7th grade and Global Studies. They should know that a totalitarian government is a 20th century phenomenon in which the interests of the state supersede all interests of the individual. Fascism, however, was not a communist form of government but rather was a manifestation of capitalism's fear of communism. They should understand the influence of propaganda on effective control of the population by these governments.

Students should know that both Adolph Hitler and Franklin Delano Roosevelt came into office in 1933 amidst the social and economic upheaval of the Great Depression. FDR told the American people that they had "nothing to fear but fear itself," while Hitler raised the longstanding fear of and prejudice against the Jews as the source of all of Germany's political and economic troubles. Hitler justified his aggressive military actions as corrections to the punitive Versailles Treaty and European powers acquiesced with a policy of appeasement. During the 1930s, the Congress passed a series of neutrality acts designed to prevent war based on America's experiences prior to their entrance into World War I and on Americans' disillusionment with the Great War. These acts prohibited the sale of arms or lending of money to countries involved in any military action. This initiated a policy of **isolationism** from foreign conflicts and severely restricted the ability of President Roosevelt to respond to the aggression of Nazi Germany

and a militaristic Japan. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 initiated the aggressive Japanese policy against China and Indochina that was designed to create a Japanese sphere of economic domination. The response of the United States to Japan's aggressive actions was hampered by isolationism, but included trade restrictions which the Japanese viewed as threatening. When Hitler broke the Munich Pact by invading Czechoslovakia, the European policy of appeasement ended.

The German invasion of Poland in 1939 led to war in Europe. French and British forces fell back against the onslaught of the Nazi blitzkrieg and the British came under devastating air attack. FDR sought ways to provide aid within the confines of the neutrality acts and to change American policy from **isolationism to international involvement**. This led to the progressively more involved policies of "Cash and Carry," the destroyers-for-bases deal and Lend Lease. Roosevelt's commitment to oppose German and Japanese aggression was evidenced by the Quarantine Speech and the signing of the Atlantic Charter. Prior to the official entry of the United States into World War II, the American navy was involved in protecting shipments of Lend Lease goods to the Allies and therefore lost ships in the Atlantic to German attacks. By 1941, the United States was in a state of undeclared naval war with Germany. The **Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor** on December 7, 1941 forced the United States to officially abandon its policy of isolationism. The subsequent American declaration of war against Japan led Germany to declare war on the United States, making the United States officially at war with Germany and its allies, Japan and Italy.

It is not essential for the students to know:

Students do not need to remember the details of the rise of Mussolini, Hitler or Tojo in their respective countries but *should* know how these totalitarian regimes threatened and then disrupted world peace. They do not need to remember all of the details of their aggressions such as the "Rape of Nanking," the remilitarization of the Rhineland, the annexation of Austria, or the invasion of the Sudetenland. They need not know that the Spanish Civil War was a dress rehearsal for World War II, as Germany and Italy supported the forces of Francisco Franco against the legitimate communist-dominated republican government in Spain. They do not need to know about the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. It is not necessary for students to understand the differences among the three neutrality acts. Any discussion of the conspiracy theory surrounding the bombing of Pearl Harbor would be counterproductive, as this theory has been refuted by historians.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments will require students to **analyze** the factors that led to the rise of three strong totalitarian governments in the 1920s and 1930s. Students should be able to **compare** the totalitarianism of Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo to democracy in the United States and Great Britain. Students should be able to **explain** why the United States Congress passed the Neutrality Acts and how these limited the options available to President Roosevelt. Students should be able to **compare** the circumstances that led the United States to enter World War I to the circumstances leading up to World War II. They should be able to **interpret** maps and political cartoons to **infer** their relationship to information about the time period.